



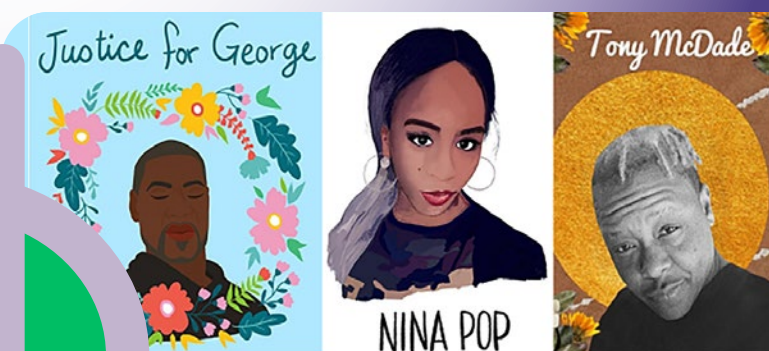
National Black Justice Coalition

NBJC.org



A NEW ERA OF  
OPPORTUNITY

CO-CREATING A NATION  
WHERE WE ALL CAN THRIVE



ENSURING THAT ALL BLACK  
LIVES MATTER

REPAIRING & RECONCILING  
A NATION DIVIDED



POLICY AGENDA



# WHO



# WE ARE

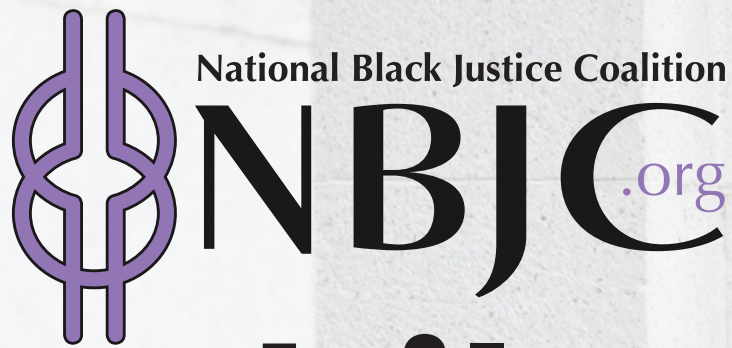
The **NATIONAL BLACK JUSTICE COALITION (NBJC)** is a civil rights organization dedicated to the empowerment of Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer+, and same gender loving (LGBTQ+/SGL) people, including people living with HIV/AIDS. With a particular focus on federal public policy, NBJC is charged with the mission to end racism, homophobia, and LGBTQ+/SGL bias and stigma. We work at the intersection of the racial justice and LGBTQ+/SGL equality and equity movements by advocating for the unique needs of Black people that are too often ignored or rendered invisible.

## *New Ideas for a New Era of Opportunity*

**We have entered a new era of opportunity in the global movement for Black lives** as more people come to awareness about the threats that anti-Blackness presents. Honoring that Black LGBTQ+/SGL people have always led from the frontlines of efforts to advance racial justice and other forms of civil and human rights, NBJC supports members of our community in **Owning Their Power** by naming barriers to thriving and organizing to move those barriers out of the way.

Thankfully, people are finally understanding what our community has been saying for over a century: that intersectional identities matter, especially when we are creating policy and shifting practice. We are excited to contribute to this new era of compassion, awareness, and national reimagining by centering Black LGBTQ+/SGL stories, educating and cultivating accomplices, and expanding civil rights protections that afford us all the opportunity to thrive. The following principles will guide our efforts in 2021.





# Philosophical

## PILLAR ONE

### Ensuring that ALL Black Lives Matter

As civil rights, racial equity, and criminal justice transformations take center stage in the new Congress and Biden/Harris administration, NBJC is prioritizing legislation that applies an intersectional lens that includes LGBTQ+/SGL equality ensuring that ALL Black lives are included in what becomes law. We will monitor and support passage of the following:

#### The Equality Act

The Equality Act expands the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to finally include ALL Black people, in all areas of public life and services, including publicly funded programs. This will also broaden and put into statute the protections granted to LGBTQ people under sex discrimination claims through the recent Bostock US Supreme Court Decision.

We are advocating for the next iteration of the bill to include the ability to seek justice regarding discrimination that is the result of combined identities, like being both Black and LGBTQ+/SGL. We are also advocating for the addition of legal protections based on source of income which would treat programs like housing vouchers the same as cash and to ensure that language around publicly funded programs is both expansive and explicit enough to allow victims to sue in the wake of discriminatory interactions with police, ICE, and other criminal justice personnel (i.e. probation officers, etc.).



# Pillars

**IT'S TIME  
TO PASS THE  
EQUALITY ACT!**

**#EQUALITYACT**



# The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act creates a national standard for law enforcement use of force, a national police misconduct database, removes qualified immunity for police officers who recklessly and needlessly takes a life, empowers prosecutors to scrutinize police misconduct, and grants the Justice Department subpoena power to investigate police departments for racial discrimination.

**We are advocating** for “police misconduct” to include sexual assault and harassment, which disproportionately impacts queer women and transgender people.



## Equal Rights Amendment

The United States Constitution has never explicitly been amended to include equality for all sexes. The Equal Rights Amendment recently reached the number of states needed to change this, but it was too late.

**We are advocating** for the US Congress to extend the deadline in order to finally provide equal rights under the law on the basis of sex. With the recent US Supreme Court case interpreting sex as inclusive of LGBTQ+/SGL people due to sex stereotyping, this amendment would also essentially add LGBTQ people into the US constitution as well.



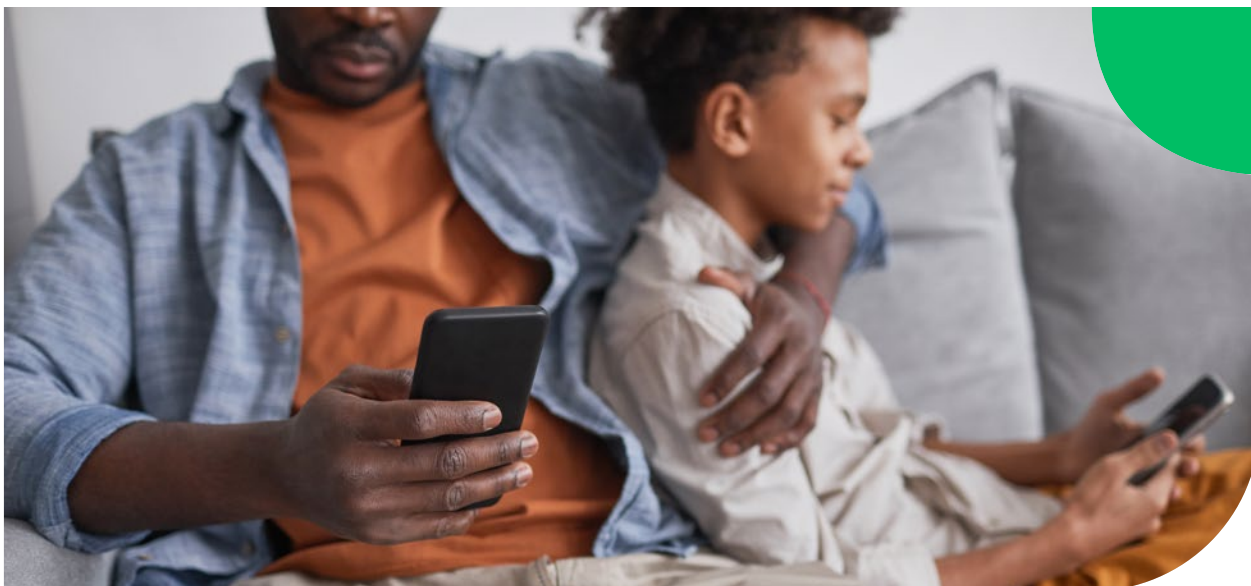
# Internet Access and Security for All

We are advocating for universal, reliable, low-cost or free, high-speed broadband internet service (unless and until something more powerful becomes available). Full participation in civic, educational, and economic opportunities requires reliable high-speed internet access.

**We will advocate** to ensure that Black people, who are disproportionately pushed out of "mainstream" institutions and into "alternative" and punitive spaces, have access to the education and workforce development required for full opportunities in the global 21st century economic landscape, while advocating to end the discrimination that creates segregation, hardship, and opportunity disparity.

**We will monitor** congressional action around Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. At its core, Section 230 provides immunity to social media companies like Facebook and Twitter against user content lawsuits. This allows them to operate relatively democratically without needing to police content. Proposed changes to Section 230 have had a negative impact on the efforts of The National Black Justice Coalition to raise critical awareness around HIV/AIDS education days or to call attention to the disproportionate rate at which Black trans women continue to be murdered and not receive justice. NBJC will work to ensure that Section 230 is strengthened in ways that account for the often overlooked, intersectional needs of our communities.

**We will increase** awareness around data privacy and digital surveillance, with particular attention to issues of bias in artificial intelligence and predictive software, which preemptively criminalizes Black people in schools and in carceral settings. While much the attention has focused on how governments collect data or use surveillance there are also significant concerns about how businesses use, share, and sell user data. As digital technologies capture and have the potential to profit from an array of information about individual habits, preferences, prejudices, and personality, it is imperative that the rights of Black LGBTQ+/SGL people are centered.





# NBJC Administrative Priorities:

- An Executive Order for a program in the Department of Justice that would investigate and respond to the often unsolved cases in the epidemic of hate crimes resulting in the murders of transgender and gender nonconforming people. The program would prioritize restorative justice focused sentencing;
- Increased community awareness of government employment opportunities through targeted recruitment and commitment to anti-racist, nonbiased hiring processes;
- Reducing racial inequity in the federal government by removing barriers to federal programs and services;
- Restoration of pre-Trump era civil rights rules, guidance, and other administrative policies providing protections to various marginalized communities;
- Eliminating law enforcement's use of identity-based profiling and harassment while increasing rehabilitation and restorative justice as alternatives to incarceration, and eliminating the levying of stiffer sentences based in stigma, bias, and prejudice; and
- Addressing the patchwork of civil rights laws that have left out women, LGBTQ+/SGL people, and those who live at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities.





## PILLAR TWO

# Co-Creating a Nation Where We ALL can THRIVE

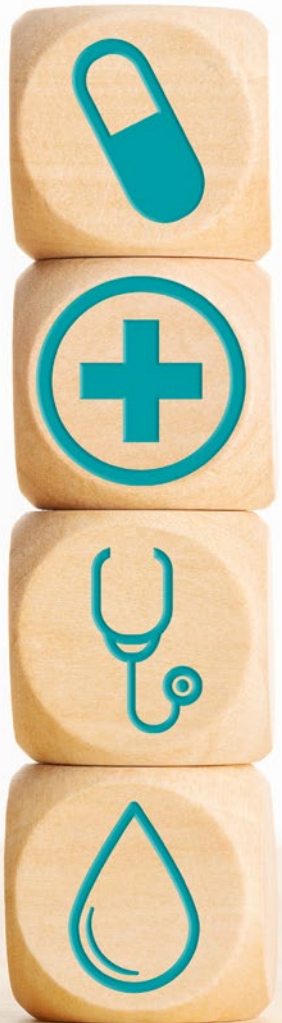
Our education and healthcare systems have failed too many of us. To create a nation where all of us can thrive, we must create and enforce policies that prioritize holistic health and well-being while investing in learning and development opportunities that center and celebrate our beautifully diverse community. We will prioritize and monitor the following:

### Protecting ACA & Expanding Health Care

Every American in all 50 states, DC, and all five U.S. territories must have access to affordable, responsive, high-quality, and culturally competent health insurance that allows them to live whole and healthy lives. It is also critically important that responses to the novel coronavirus are democratized. The intersectional needs of Black LGBTQ+/SGL people must be prioritized, including as we continue to seek a cure for the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which continues to disproportionately impact Black communities.

#### *We are advocating for:*

- A publicly funded healthcare option, insurance funded fertility support for LGBTQ+/SGL parents, and robust funding for HIV/AIDS, cancer, mental health, and transgender and nonbinary inclusive reproductive health research and prevention campaigns.
- That the federal government provide a legal remedy for the thousands of HIV/AIDS survivors and loved ones of those lost in the early decades of the pandemic when the federal government chose to do nothing to stop or limit the virus due largely to homophobia and prejudice; and
- That displaced and unhoused youth, including those whose homes are hostile or unsafe, have access to free healthcare; and
- Cannabis decriminalization and legalization with retroactive expungement of records.



# The Student Loan Debt Relief Act

The Student Loan Debt Relief Act provides student loan relief to 95% of borrowers in the US by cancelling up to \$50,000 worth of student loan debt within households making less than \$100,000 annually, improving credit scores, and permitting private to public refinancing of student loans. This removes a major barrier to our community's thriving, while making it easier to build intergenerational wealth. This relief is especially important considering the debt carried by and economic barriers facing Black LGBTQ+/SGL people, families, and communities.



We are advocating for the descendants of enslaved Africans in the United States to have no household cap on relief as an acknowledgement that the wealth gap for Black Americans dates back to the nation's earliest days and its establishment of a racial caste system to justify enslavement, brutality, and theft. Debt and denied opportunity has continued to burden Black Americans intergenerationally, and been reinforor greater, financial support as other potential parents in the child welfare

system, as this is the most common method of foster care and adoption among Black families. We are also advocating to ensure that resources are allocated to recruit and support Black LGBTQ+/SGL parents in becoming foster and adopted parents to the large number of Black children stuck in the child welfare system.





# Every Child Deserves a Family Act

The Every Child Deserves a Family Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and marital status in the administration and provision of child welfare services. This legislation also creates a national resource center to advance best practices and cultural competencies in serving and helping children and youth who identify as LGBTQ+.

We are advocating for kinship care guardians to receive the same, or greater, financial support as other potential parents in the child welfare system, as this is the most common method of foster care and adoption among Black families. We are also advocating to ensure that resources are allocated to recruit and support Black LGBTQ+/SGL parents in becoming foster and adopted parents to the large number of Black children stuck in the child welfare system.



## Therapeutic Fraud Prevention Act of 2019

Efforts to change LGBTQ+/SGL youth's sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression is a practice known as conversion therapy. In the Black community, these practices have resulted in disproportionate numbers of our youth attempting and committing suicide. The American Psychological Association has repeatedly declared that conversion therapy is harmful and traumatic for anyone to endure - especially our young people. They have debunked the science behind it and have reiterated that it is detrimental to one's mental health and wellbeing. Whether it is being administered by a therapist or a member of the clergy, the result is still the same - a person is forever scarred by a process that has been discredited and named by experts as incredibly dangerous. Twenty states and more than 80 municipalities have successfully passed legislation protecting our youth from conversion therapy by licensed health care professionals; however they do not include the rest of the country nor address that most conversion therapy is done by unlicensed religious ministries. This bill would outlaw this practice from happening in clinical settings all across the country.

**We are advocating** for the addition that conversion therapy cannot take place at taxpayer-funded faith institutions.

# NBJC Administrative Priorities:

- Restoration of “Obama Era” civil rights guidance for transgender students;
- Student loan relief through cancellation, refinancing programs, and interest rate lowering;
- COVID-19 education requirements for school districts to include virtual opportunities for services typically received in person at school; such as, academic coaching, guidance counseling, peer-mentoring, and trade/college preparation support;
- Restoration of Obama-era guidance and support related to restorative justice, social emotional learning, and an end to the disproportionate discipline of students of color and students with disabilities;
- Ensure federally sponsored teacher training programs include developmentally appropriate, intersectional, and universally inclusive content and language;
- Ensure comprehensive, culturally competent mental health support in schools for students, faculty, and staff; and
- Expanding access to existing federal healthcare programs such as the VA, Medicare, and Medicaid by broadening the scope of who is eligible for them.





## PILLAR THREE

# Repairing & Reconciling a Nation Divided

Our nation was built upon, and continues to profit from, the unpaid and under-compensated labor of Black people. This current moment in the global movement for Black lives presents the United States with an important opportunity to be accountable for racial healing and to make the investments necessary to redress historical and present-day harms. These harms include wage and land theft, environmental poisoning, unfair sentencing where years with loved ones can never be returned, and loved ones lost to HIV/AIDS when the government chose to ignore an enduring pandemic. The following priorities advance this work:

## Economic Justice Act

The Economic Justice Act provides critical investments in childcare, community healthcare, jobs, entrepreneurship, infrastructure improvements at HBCUs in predominantly Black communities, home ownership, Medicaid expansion, addressing maternal mortality rates, and offers renter and low income housing tax credits to address historic and systemic wrongs targeting Black people in America.

**We are advocating** for a specific accounting for LGBTQ+/SGL people, so they do not fall through the cracks in language or outcomes as this legislation progresses.

## BREATHE Act

The Breathe Act divests funds from law enforcement agencies and police departments and invests those funds into specifically trained first responders, trauma informed interventionists, social workers, and mental health experts. The bill also divests federal dollars from incarceration and invests those funds into non-punitive, non-carceral approaches to community safety.

**We are advocating for:**

- Culturally competent LGBTQ+/SGL training to be provided to all involved in a re-imagined public safety infrastructure;
- Resources to also be invested in organizations that support Black unhoused youth, mental health, and job opportunities; and
- Community and safety programs receiving support to be intersectionally inclusive in policy and programming.



# Next Step Act

The Next Step Act eliminates the sentencing disparities that still exist between crack and powder cocaine, assists those coming out of prison in getting proper work authorization and ID documents, reduces the barriers formerly incarcerated individuals face when they try to find jobs, ends the federal prohibition on marijuana, provides better training for law enforcement officers in implicit racial bias, de-escalation, and use-of-force, mandates better reporting of police use of force, ensures the right to vote and to be connected with loved ones, and bans racial and religious bias and profiling.

## *We are advocating for:*

- LGBTQ+/SGL people to be included in order to reduce sentencing disparities and profiling, which are increased for people who are both Black and LGBTQ+/SGL. This is also designed to address the over-policing of femmes and masculine-of-center and transgender women; and
- Decriminalization and legalization of sex work, loitering, and cannabis along with retroactive expunging of records.

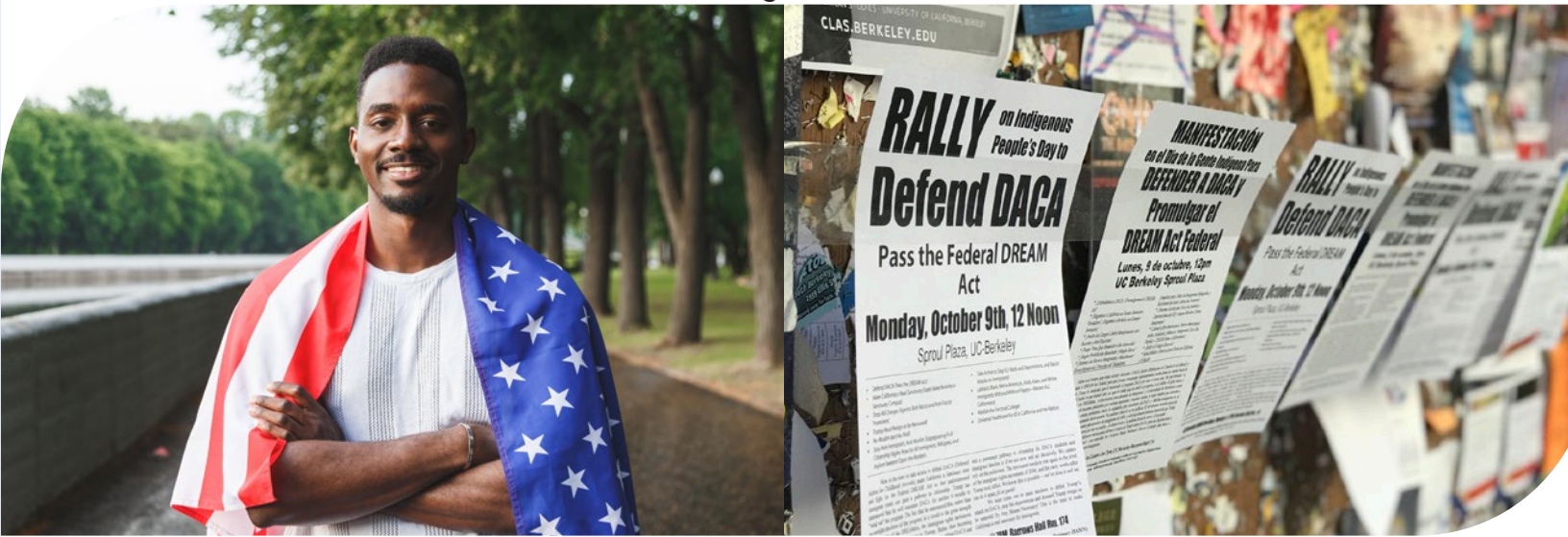




# Comprehensive Immigration Reform

As we wait for new legislation, we will continue to demand that the over 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country have a pathway to citizenship and to thriving.

**We are advocating** for comprehensive immigration reform that acknowledges the unique and often overlooked needs of Black immigrants.



## Truth and Reconciliation Reparations Commission

Though the Civil Rights Movement challenged many of the most racist practices and structures that subjugated the African-American community, it was not followed by a commitment to truth and reconciliation. For that reason, and others, the legacy of racial inequality has persisted and left the nation vulnerable to continued division, disparity, injustice, and domestic and foreign threat.

**We are advocating** for honest conversations that lead to intersectional remedies and reparations that address compounded exclusions experienced by Black LGBTQ+/SGL people and others holding multiple marginalized identities.

## NBJC Administrative Priorities:

Establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to provide a comprehensive study of possible reparations for the descendants of Africans enslaved in the US. Additionally, the Biden/Harris administration should appoint an inter-agency task force to meaningfully respond to lessons from reparations related actions that have taken place in governments around the world.

# CALL TO ACTION

**To build the people power needed to turn these policies from ideas into law, we need YOU to own YOUR power. Our collective power can change our nation and the opportunities for our communities for generations to come, but it requires organizing and sustained advocacy. Below are a few action items to get you started:**

1. Become a Black Justice Champion by visiting our website at nbjc.org, signing up for upcoming actions, alerts, newsletter, and by sharing your #IAmNBjc story. Please also consider following us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Our handle on each is @NBjConthemove.
2. Contact your members of Congress to support and become a champion of these pieces of legislation today. You can look up their offices and various methods of contact here: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>.
3. Attend a congressional event to ask your member of Congress to support and become a champion of the pieces of legislation you care about. You can find events near you at <https://townhallproject.com/>
4. Share with us how your life and the lives of those you love would be improved by discrimination prevention policies becoming law.
5. Join a phone bank with our colleagues at the National Equality Action Team to grow the number of power-builders taking action on issues we care about.

**Learn more about our additional opportunities and those of our partners by visiting us regularly at <http://www.nbjc.org>.**

